

REMARKS

Claim 1 is amended herein to be consistent with the priority document

I. Response to Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph

Claim 3 is rejected as allegedly being indefinite. The Examiner asserts that it is not clear: (1) whether the claim requires an (i-2) layer or not; (2) whether the alloy layer of tin and iron must meet the requirements of (i-2) or whether it is an additional layer; and (3) whether the claim intends to specify an order of disposition of the layers on the steel plate surface or not.

Claim 3 depends from claim 1. Claim 3 is directed to the embodiment wherein (i-2) of claim 1 is selected and a tin-iron alloy layer is formed due to the formation of an alloy by the steel plate and by part of the tin in the tin-plated layer on the side of the steel plate after reflow processing. Therefore, claim 3 is amended to recite that the tin-plated layer (i-2) is provided on the at least one surface of the steel plate and comprises an alloy layer of tin and iron to clarify that the (i-2) layer is required and that the alloy layer of tin and iron make up the (i-2) layer. Thus, the resin-coated steel plate has a layer constitution of a tin-iron alloy layer, a tin-plated layer, a silane coupling agent-treated layer, and a thermoplastic polyester resin layer in this order from the side of the steel plate.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

II. Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3-5, 8, 9 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by Nakakoji et al (JP '281).

Claims 1, 3, 8-10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by Shimizu et al (JP '809) for the reasons of record.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Shimizu et al (JP '809) for the reasons of record.

The Examiner's position is that the priority documents do not support an unbounded upper limit for the amount of tin in the (i-2) layer.

In response, claim 1 has been amended herein to recite an upper limit of the amount of tin in the (i-2) layer of 12 g/m² so as to find full written description support in Applicants' priority document (see claim 1 of JP 2002-64127). By perfecting their claim to priority to JP 2002-64114 and JP 2002-64127 filed March 8, 2002, Applicants have antedated the April 16, 2002 effective date of Shimizu et al. The amended claims find full support in the priority documents, verified translations of which were previously submitted together with the Amendment filed November 15, 2005.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the §102 and §103 prior art rejections.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. App. Ser. No. 10/507,103

Atty. Dckt. No. Q83539

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

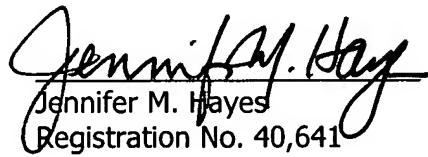
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: May 9, 2006